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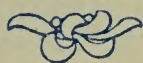
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CONTINUATION COMMITTEE

... THE ... North American Section

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Missionary Meeting



For Young People's Societies



What it is and How to Conduct it

By ELLA D. MacLAURIN



YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

American Baptist Missionary Union

BOSTON

Young People's Department.

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The Missionary Meeting:

What it is, and How to Conduct it.



A MISSIONARY MEETING is the place where you introduce Joseph to his brethren, and the **five hundred million** downtrodden, helpless, hopeless, loveless, prayerless, soulless women of heathen lands to their more favored sisters. These Missionary meetings are the reservoirs from which our boards must draw, in order to water the heathen world. If these meetings are dry, empty, unpalatable cups instead of capacious reservoirs the supply will be meager, and the production correspondingly scanty. Therefore the subject, **“The Missionary Meeting: What it is, and How to Conduct it,”** is most appropriate for discussion.

At these meetings we become acquainted with those of our brothers and sisters who have not counted their lives dear, that they might extend the boundaries of the Savior's kingdom; whose blood has consecrated the soil of every land, and whose names are written in letters of light in the blue heavens of

every Christian denomination. Here we learn to love those who first scaled the

Almost Inaccessible Fastness of Paganism,

and toiled on in the midst of discouragements and untold suffering until today that gigantic and hoary superstition is tottering to its fall. And here we come into deeper sympathy with those who, through self-denial and heroic purpose and sacrifice, have sought to do His will, and have carried His gospel to the nations that sit in darkness. Familiarity with these noble men and royal women will make us inheritors of their sublime faith and devotion. The contemplation of what God has wrought through them will kindle in our hearts a glowing gratitude and a larger desire for the redemption of a lost race. The thought of what remains to be done will increase our dependence upon the divine spirit.

And it is here, too, we learn the nature of their work; that it has to do, not with the relief of physical need and suffering alone, not with the diffusion of knowledge, not with the material progress of society, but rather with the peace, the enlightenment, the redemption of immortal souls, and their restoration to the fellowship and image of God. That their work is more than sweet charity, and more than philanthropy, and more than

education ; that it is **salvation**, the very impartation of a new nature and a new and eternal life, the very Christ life incarnate in human souls ; and that the

Great Son, of God Came in Person to Earth

to execute heaven's purpose of mercy, to construct by those spotless and bleeding hands the very ark of life for a perishing world, and to place in the hands of his church the destiny of a lost and ruined humanity.

And in these missionary meetings are we not lifted up into a closer fellowship with the spirit of the

First Great Missionary

who came "to seek and to save the lost ;" who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister ;" who, "though he was rich yet for our sakes became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich ;" "who, being in the very form of God, counted it not a prize to be on equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ?"

O patient Christ !

Did once thy tender, earnest eyes

Look down the solemn centuries

And see the smallness of our lives !

And here at Christ's feet we learn to read our duty, and here duty becomes delight, and obedience possible, and sacrifice changes to privilege, and we come into a fuller appreciation of his almighty and far-reaching grace, and a more intense and unquenchable longing for the complete coming of his kingdom in the whole earth. Ah! yes, it is here, too, we hear the voice of him whom we love most and best, whom rightly we would call "Master and Lord," as he pleads with us so tenderly,

"Go, Preach My Gospel to Every Creature,"

and "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these, then feed my lambs, feed my sheep." "For, if ye love me, ye will keep my commandments," and "Ye are my friends if ye **do** whatsoever I command you." And right here battles are fought more terrible than any that were ever waged on a battle-field, and victories are won that will go down through the channels of human life and will do much to form the destiny of the whole human family; for it is here at Jesus' feet, with the world shut out, that we listen with him to the great heart's cry that goes up ceaselessly from this lost world that brought him from his glorious heaven down to this sin-cursed earth, that led him, step by step, from Bethlehem's emptying to Calvary's cru-

cifixion through many a Gethsemane; and here by his own spirit possessed and inspired we are ready to sing with deepest reality and meaning —

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all.

Therefore we esteem it a privilege to follow him anywhere he leads,— in darkest Africa or to the Ethiopia of our own land; in the jungles of India or among the peoples of our own forests; among the wild savage tribes of Burma or to the cesspools of Chicago; to the fellowship of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Russia in the face of impending doom to Siberian exile, or with him we can kneel at the bedside of the dying, hopeless, soulless women of China, or cross some threshold of vice and suffering in the slums of our cities; yes, anywhere with Jesus we can safely go, cheered and encouraged by his gracious assurance,

“Lo, I am with You all the Days.”

Missionary workers, especially will **He** be with you, and under the touch of his almighty

spirit plans and methods will spring forth, whose lapping waves of spiritual revival and missionary consecration shall not fail to reach every nook and corner of the heathen world.

And it is in these **missionary meetings** that we are brought face to face with the fact that at this instant two-thirds of the human family are yet in absolute ignorance of both Bible and Christ, and that **two millions** of souls for whom Christ died have each month gone into a dark and dread eternity without ever having heard of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. In the face of these facts, are we not called upon to prove either that God has called us to stay at home or to give ourselves, our all, in glad surrender to God for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom among these lost people? Then where can we find a service so important, so helpful, so uplifting, so divine, as in this missionary meeting?

A WORD ABOUT THE PROGRAM.

The preparation of the program should be most thorough and complete. Let the leader of the meeting, with another member of the committee, arrange and be responsible for the program,—a new committee for each meeting. These two may call in every member of the society to aid in its execution. I do believe

in giving every person something to do. Suppose you have twelve or fifteen three-minute guns. This will insure increased activity, and this is the secret of all success in any undertaking, for responsibility awakens interest.

Bishop Hall once said: "I have known a man to come from a funeral in high spirits because he had the management of it." Besides, the diversity of gifts and variety of exercises at the monthly missionary meeting, the new treatment of familiar subjects,—the old facts in new dresses,—cannot fail to give a vigor and life to the meeting.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.

The Scripture lesson, or Bible reading, should be short and right to the point. The prayers should not be long; sentence prayers are more desirable and profitable. For though I believe with all my heart in the efficacy of prayer, yet I think that, to be of the greatest value here, it should be found with Christ in the closet or with Jacob under the stars.

THE MUSIC.

We do not make enough of this God-given gift of song; we need the inspiration that comes from the notes of God's battle-songs. The soldiers of Gustavus Adolphus were accustomed to kneel in the midst of an en-

gagement and sing Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is our God," then up, charge the enemy, and win the victory. We workers are in the midst of a conflict; we need brave hearts; therefore let us sing those hymns that will so strengthen our faith as to lift visibly before us the sign through which we are to conquer. For example:

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the church of Jesus
Constant shall remain.
Gates of Hell can never
'Gainst that church prevail,
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail,
Onward, Christian soldier,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before.

MAPS AND CHARTS.

To give definiteness and reality to our study a map **must be used**. Every time the lesson is about China there should be a map of that country upon the wall, where every person can see it, with the names of the mission stations printed so large that they can be easily read by everyone.

Make your own map. Let them be outline maps and leave most of the details to the imagination. Purchase several yards of good

cotton cloth, fasten on a smooth wall, and with a long rule, mark the lines of latitude and longitude so as to form large squares, making no attempt at curved lines, and then holding a small map before you, outline in lead pencil, following the corresponding squares, and your outline will be easily sketched. Then take any common house paint, a few cents' worth of each color used will be sufficient, and mixing this with a little powdered glue wet with gasoline, with a narrow brush follow the outline, and before you know it your map will be made. Then place the names of the stations and write the names in good large letters that can be seen the distance of a good-sized room.

Aside from your home-made map, which will be of the very greatest possible value in fixing in memory the position of mission stations, send to the Missionary Union for their splendid map of the Asiatic Missions; price, \$3.50. For the latter, address Rev. E. F. Merriam, Tremont Temple, Boston, and he will forward you the map, giving you three months, if need be, in which to make payments for the same.

INVITATION COMMITTEE.

Let two members of the society issue invitations with a copy of the program to **every**

member of the congregation the week previous to the meeting.

MUSIC COMMITTEE.

Two others to have charge of the music after the leader has carefully selected what is to be sung. Never sing more than two verses at one time, and please do away with all preludes, interludes, and postludes in a missionary meeting and worship God in song, "singing and making melody in your hearts unto the Lord."

USHERS.

Appoint two others as ushers, who shall see that the room is well ventilated and everything tastefully arranged and that **side and back seats** are **sacredly reserved until all the seats nearest the altar are filled.**

I do believe that the physical discomfort and mental depression that follow an hour's sitting in an uncomfortable, distasteful room to be one reason why our meetings are shunned. Therefore arrange your room as you would your home when you are expecting to entertain most honorable guests. For have you not from your closet sent an invitation to the King of Glory, and do you not hold in your hand his gracious answer, "Surely I will be with you?"

THE OFFERING.

Expect and endeavor to have each one take a heart and pocketbook interest in the treasury. Let your giving be **Systematic, Proportionate, Worshipful, Heroic and Hilarious**, "as the Lord has prospered you." Let this be an **act** of worship. Let your giving be heroic in sacrifice and saturated in importunate prevailing prayer for the object for which you give. Each one place his gift each week in the "Globe Box" or "Stewardship Envelope" at his own home.

"We are not sending dollars and cents, but we are sending human hearts thrilled through and through with love for Jesus, and human hands and brains consecrated to his service. We are **sending Jesus**, and that means eternal life."

THE QUESTION BOX.

An occasional very interesting feature of the Missionary meeting is the question box, which will arouse deep thought and earnest search on the part of those who prepare and those who answer the questions.

PHOTOGRAPHS.

Obtain photographs of your missionaries and their surroundings, and also let one of your number write to some missionary each

month asking about his field, its needs, and **how you can help him.** Strive to have each member take special interest in your workers abroad. Be sure and have on the blackboard the topic for that day, found in "The Prayer Cycle," and spend at least five minutes in each meeting in special prayer for the work and workers indicated. Make a chain of prayer that will go over the cable of God's throne and lift fallen humanity back to the fellowship and image of God. See that every person who takes part is heard; speak so all shall hear.

HOW TO CONDUCT IT.

The conduct of the meeting must be carefully attended to. The plan of the architect may be spoiled by the builder, and the loveliest product of the loom may be ruined by the dressmaker; and so a presiding officer can make shipwreck of the best arranged program. Let the leader of the meeting begin on the minute; begin if there is not another person present,— begin with God for an audience.

Let the program be carried out, giving to each one the allotted time and **no more.** If you have twelve or fifteen three-minute papers or talks, keep them within their time. Interperse with prayer and song. Always close

your program **with some practical application.** For example, if your field is Swatow, let your last paper or talk be, "What are the needs of Swatow? Can we supply them? Will we supply them?" Then sing very softly, some appropriate verses, such as —

Can we whose souls are lighted
By wisdom from on high,
Can we to men benighted,
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! oh, salvation!
The joyful song proclaim,
'Till earth's remotest nation
Has learned Messiah's name!

followed by silent prayer, the offering and benediction.

But I hear some one say, "This **means work.**" **It does;** and it ought to. This is the King's business. When the heavenly vision shone upon you, and the heavenly voice thrilled your soul, did it say, "Go rest in my vineyard?" Ah, no! but He did say, "Go **work** in my vineyard."

When Garibaldi appealed for troops to set Italy free, the young men asked, "What shall be our reward?" "Reward?" replied Garibaldi, "privations, wounds, scars, and victory for Italy." Christian workers, in this warfare for the evangelization of a lost world, wounds and privations, work and sacrifice must come

to us too; but in the end, under the leadership of the great Captain, ours also shall be the glorious victory. "For the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the channels of the deep."

Oh, then, with yonder sacred throng,
We at His feet may fall,
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all.

See the accompanying leaflet, "The Committee on Missions: Its Responsibility and Work."

Read Carefully.

MISSIONARY INTEREST, if it shall abide, must be intelligent interest.

The library to be of real value must contain books, interesting, instructive, devotional, and books giving a careful survey of people, countries, religions and a history of successful Missionary enterprise.

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